

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-19 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, the Abstract, specification, and claims 1-9 are amended, and claims 10-19 are added. The Abstract, specification, and claims are amended for clarification purposes only. No new matter is added. Support for the claims can be found throughout the specification, including the original claims, the drawings. Withdrawal of the rejections in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner is thanked for the indicating that claims 3-9 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. New claim 10 is essentially allowable claim 3 written in independent form. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 10, as well as claims 11-14, which depend therefrom, should be in condition for allowance.

II. Informalities

The Office Action objects to the Abstract due to informalities. It is respectfully submitted that the Substitute Abstract provided herewith is responsive to the Examiner's comments, and thus the objection should be withdrawn.

III. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

The Office Action rejects claims 1 and 2 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Kyosuke et al., Japanese Patent Publication No. 03-143419 (hereinafter “Kyosuke”). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claim 1 is directed to a dishwasher comprising a coupler configured to link an intake port cover with a rotational shaft of a fan motor, and to transfer a driving force of the fan motor to the intake port cover so as to selectively open and close the steam intake port of the fan housing. Kyosuke neither discloses nor suggests at least such features, let alone the claimed combination of features.

Kyosuke discloses a dishwasher, including a cleaning tub 15 which is closed by a door 23. An air suction inlet 24 is formed on an inside of the door 23 facing the cleaning tub 15, and an air discharge outlet 25 is formed on an outside of the door 23, in communication with the air suction inlet 24. An air discharge damper 26 is rotatably installed between the air suction inlet 24 and the air discharge outlet 25. During a drying operation, an air exhaust fan 28 is driven to cause steam generated in the tub 15 to be discharged through the air discharge outlet 25. More specifically, as air pressure within the tub 15 is increased due to operation of the exhaust fan 28, the increased air pressure causes the air discharge damper 26 to move from its at rest, vertical position closing off the air suction inlet 24 to an open position toward the air discharge 25, as shown in shadow in Figure 1 of Kyosuke. The air discharge damper 26 returns to its at rest position when the air exhaust fan 28 is no longer operating and air pressure within the tub 15 returns to normal.

The air exhaust fan 28 and fan motor 27 which drives the fan 28 (compared in the Office Action to the fan motor recited in independent claim 1) are clearly on an opposite side of the tub 15 than the air discharge damper 26 (compared in the Office Action to the intake port cover recited in independent claim 1) which selectively covers either the air suction inlet 24 and the air discharge outlet 25 (compared in the Office Action to the intake port and exhaust port, respectively, recited in independent claim 1). Thus, operation of the damper 26 is driven by an air pressure within the tub 15, and not by any type of physical coupling of the fan 27 and the damper 26. Kyosuke neither discloses nor suggests that the damper 26 is in any way coupled to the fan 28 or fan motor 27, and thus necessarily neither discloses nor suggests a coupler configured to link the damper 26 and a fan 28, as recited in independent claim 1, let alone that any such coupler would also transfer driving force from the fan 28 to the damper 26, as recited in independent claim 1.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 1 is not anticipated by Kyosuke, and thus the rejection to claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) should be withdrawn. Claim 2 is allowable at least for the reasons set forth above with respect to independent claim 1, from which it depends, as well as for its added features.

IV. New Claims 10-19

New claims 10-19 are added to the application. It is respectfully submitted that new claims 10-19 also define over the applied prior art, and meet the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112. More specifically, as set forth above, new claim 10 is allowable claim 3 rewritten in independent form, and thus new independent claim 10, as well as new claims 11-14, which depend therefrom, should be in condition for allowance. New claim 15, and claims 16-19, which depend therefrom, are also allowable for reasons similar to those given above.

CONCLUSION

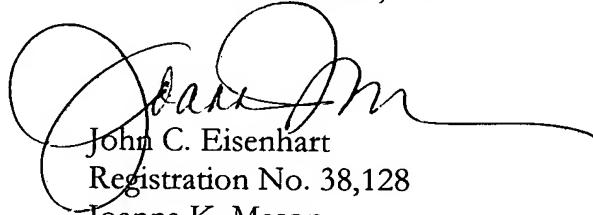
In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that any additional changes would place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney, **Joanna K. Mason**, at the telephone number listed below.

Serial No. **10/721,739**
Reply to Office Action of August 14, 2006

Docket No. **K-0574**

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this, concurrent and future replies, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 16-0607 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,
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